

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 10034 151138Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 DHA-02 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
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FOLG RECD FROM CALCUTTA AND RPTD FOR YOUR INFO. QUOTE.

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: CASC, PINT, IN
SUBJECT: COMMENTS IN COMMUNIST PRESS ON MAYAPUR INCIDENT

REF: CALCUTTA 1661

1. CPI DAILY KALANTAR, JULY 14 CARRIES LONG ARTICLE ON
MAYAPUR INCIDENT ENTITLED "ISKCON INCIDENT IN MAYAPUR NOT
ACCIDENTAL". REPORTS SAY THAT ON JULY 11 MEETING OF
STUDENTS, YOUTH AND INTELLECTUAL DEMANDED INVESTIGATION
INTO INCIDENT AND EXPLUSION OF FOREIGNERS INVOLVED.
AFTER RELATING BOTH SIDES' VERSIONS OF EVENTS ARTICLE
QUOTES ISKCON LEADER'S STATEMENT THAT CONFLICT IS PART
OF 1000 YEAR STRUGGLE BETWEEN HINDUS AND MOSLEMS. KALANTAR
CORRESPONDENT DOES NOT THINK RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES RELEVANT
ACCORDING TO HIM, REAL REASON FOR CONFLICT IS DESIRE OF
ISKCON ASHRAM TO EXPAND AND RESISTANCE TO EXPANSION BY
VILLAGERS. ISKCON IS ALLEGED TO HAVE PROPOSED TO ACQUIRE
300 ACRES OF LAND FOR RS. 110 CROERES, TWICE AS MUCH, IT
IS SAID, AS WORLD BANK IS SPENDING FOR ALL OF WEST BENGAL.
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 10034 151138Z

PROPOSAL HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN OPPOSED BY LOCAL LANDOWNERS,
WHILE ISKCON HAS MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT FROM LANDLESS
PEASANTS, DAY LABORERS AND SHOPKEEPERS. KALANTAR SEES
IN THIS "AN ATTEMPT TO DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN LANDLESS
LABORERS AND LANDOWNING FARMERS". CPI LEADERS ARE SAID
TO HAVE VISITED AREA TO LOOK INTO INDICENT.

2. IN ITS EDITION OF JULY 14 PRO-CPM DAILY SATYAJUG QUOTES CPM LEADER OF NADIA DISTRICT AND MEMBER OF WEST BENGAL CABINET AMRITENDU MUKHERJEE AS STATING THAT "INTRESTED CIRCLES HAVE LAUNCHED MANY CONSPIRATORIAL ACTIVITIES OVER THE INCIDENT ARISING OUT OF FIRING UPON THE VILLAGERS BY THE TEMPLE AUTHORITIES OF ISKCON AT MAYAPUR...THE PURPOSE OF WHICH WAS TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM THE REAL NATURE OF THE INCIDENT AND TO AROUSE THE PASSION OF THE COMMUNAL FORCES IN THAT REGION". MUKHERJEE REPORTEDLY ASKED PEOPLE TO REMAIN CALM AND NOT PLACE CREDENCE IN MALICIOUS RUMORS. FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID, "THE ALLEGATION MADE ON BEHALF OF THE AMERICAN CONSUL THAT HIS VEHLCE WAS STONED WAS UNTRUE AND MISCHIEVOUS". HE SAID HE HAD PROTESTED AGAINST THIS ALLEGATION. (ATTACK ON O'NEILL WAS, OF COURSE INDEPENDENTLY REORTED IN SEVERAL PAPERS, NOT MERELY ALLEGATION MADE BY AMERICAN CONSUL).

3. IN EDITORIAL ON SAME DAY SATYAJUG SAYS "DEEPTER MYSTERIES BEHIND THE INCIDENT..MAY NOT COME UNDER THE PURVIEW OF THE COURT". RELIGIOUS MISSIONS COMMONLY CREATE CONFLICTS WHEN THEY SET UP THEIR TEMPLES OR ESTABLISHMENTS. PAPER CALLS FOR THOROUGH PROBE OF INCIDENT AND "DRASTIC SURGERY..TO TAKE CARE OF THE MANY EXPLOSIVE CONDITIONS BEING CREATED ALL OVER THE COUNTRY IN THE NAME OF RELIGION".

4. FULL TRANSLATIONS OF ARTICLES WILL BE POUCHED
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PAGE 03 NEW DE 10034 151138Z

EMBASSY.

5. COMMENT: WE ARE SOMEWHAT SURPRISED BY THE RATHER MILD APPROACH WHICH EVEN THE LEFTIST PRESS HAS TAKEN TO THE MAYAPUR INCIDENT. AS FAR AS WE ARE AWARE THERE HAVE BEEN NO ATTEMPTS TO LINK ISKCON TO CIA OR US GOVERNMENT. CHARGE BY CPM LEADER MUKHERJEE REPORTED IN PARA 2 IS ONLY CRITICISM OF USG IN CONNECTION WITH INCIDENT OF WHICH WE ARE AWARE. AS MAYAPUR INCIDENT IS NOW BEFORE COURT WE EXPECT THAT COMMENTS WILL CONTINUE TO BE RESTRAINED.
LIEBOWITZ UNQUOTE
GOHEEN

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 15-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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